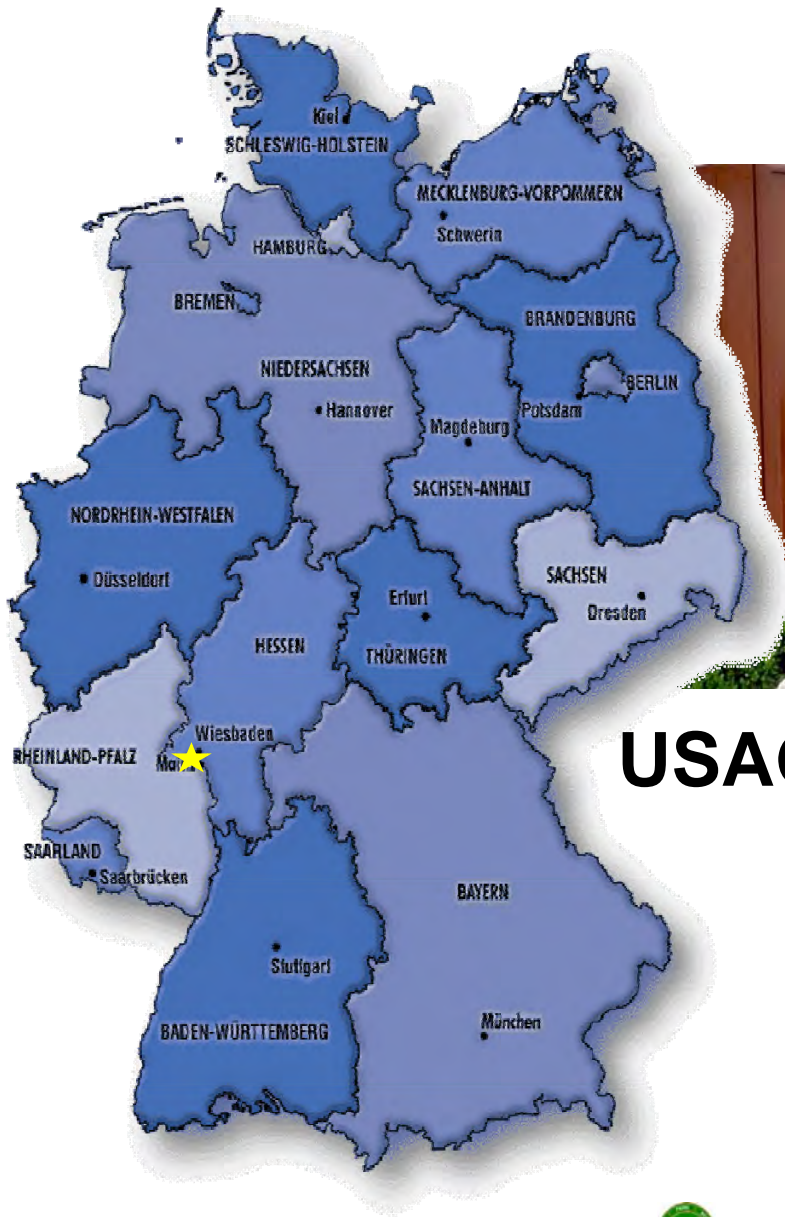




USAG Wiesbaden



USAG Wiesbaden Off-post Housing Briefing

Updated March 2013



Army Community of Excellence - 2012

POC: Don Meyer, DSN: 337-7060 email: donald.h.meyer3.civ@mail.mil

Wiesbaden: Your Home in Germany!



Welcome to the

Wiesbaden

Military Community

Housing Services Office (HSO)



Army Community of Excellence - 2012

POC: Don Meyer, DSN: 337-7060 email: donald.h.meyer3.civ@mail.mil

Wiesbaden: Your Home in Germany!



Hours of Operation



Monday - Friday

7:30 – 16:30

(last sign-in will be at 16:00)

Walk-Ins:

7:30 – 11:00

Appointments required for:

Counseling, Leases, Translations



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Briefing Hand-Outs



- Housing Services Brochure (Please read! important information about living on the economy)
- School bus routes
- Installation agreement
- Finding your own apartment (Abbreviations)
- Restrictive Sanction/Non-Referral List





Services Provided



- Assistance in locating a home through HSO Listings of available economy housing
- Transportation for house hunting – new arrivals (Service is limited to three viewings per customer)
- Lease negotiations/courtesy translations and review of our bilingual rental contracts (by appointment only)





Services Provided cont'd



- Move-in/out inspections
- Verbal translation of bills
- Administrative assistance
(Utilities/furniture/allowances)
- Mediate between tenant/landlord





Counselors



- Get acquainted & work with one counselor
 - Personalized service customized for your needs
 - Assistance from initial house hunting to move-in
 - Get your counselor's business card
 - Set up your next appointment before leaving





Referral Service



- No waiting list maintained
- 3 listings provided
- 24 hours to respond to viewed listings
- Bedroom requirements consider family composition





What to Expect on the Market



- Very competitive market
- Landlord or current tenant should show property to new incoming personnel
- Units can be listed at several places, i.e. Wiesbadener Tagesblatt, Immo Scout, PX, Thrift Shop, Immobiliens (rental agent), etc.
- **The landlord has the option to select the tenant if the property is listed with other than Wiesbaden's HSO office**





What to Expect on the Market Cont'd



- Wiesbaden Area has shortage of single-family houses
- More common are duplexes, town-houses, (row houses), or apartments
- Most homes have stairs, often two or three stories





German Housing



- What to expect in economy housing:
 - Smaller than U.S. housing
 - May not have:
 - Built-in kitchen (except listed with HSO)
 - Built-in closets
 - Light fixtures
 - Window screens
 - Smoke detectors





Immobilien



- The Housing office follows the regulatory requirements of the Joint Federal Travel Regulation, Appendix N
- Immobilien Fees for **Military personnel/families** are not authorized without prior written approval from the housing manager (Provide Immo. Letter)
- **Civilian personnel moving to Wiesbaden should check with their local CPAC/CPOC office to see if they are eligible/qualify for immobilien fee reimbursement. These are Department of State entitlements and are not approved by the housing office**
- Tenant's pay the Immobilien's fee to realtors for finding private rental housing (PRH), which is usually equal to 2 months cold rent
- **Remember** which Immobilien showed you the house/apartment!





Immobilien Cont'd



- Based on contract stipulations with our HSO contractor, Aspen **cannot** assist with lease negotiations and assignment inspections if real estate agent is involved.
- HSO (Aspen) provides our customers the same type of services at **no cost!**





Rental Agreements



- Rental agreements will be negotiated & signed at the HSO office (B-1023 west)
 - Customer + Landlord + Counselor
 - HSO Staff **WILL NOT** negotiate between prospective and current tenants
- Bilingual agreements are available & preferred
- If you find a place on your own (not including real estate agents) the lease should still be negotiated in our office to protect your interests!
- Caution: In Germany, verbal agreements made with the landlord or immobilien realtor are binding!





Rental Agreement Features



- “Open ended” lease, indefinite term
- Termination clause for non-PCS moves
 - 3 months per German law
 - Effective last day of calendar month
- Military clause 30 days, for PCS orders
 - 1 – 2 Month(s)
 - Negotiable, not required by law





Rental Agreement Features Cont'd



- Utilities:
 - Always pro-rated with annual reconciliation
 - Paid directly to utility company or landlord or combination there of.
 - Includes trash removal
- Other expenses:
 - Property tax, insurances
 - Maintenance of heating system
 - Chimney sweeping





Security Deposit



- Security deposit is usually two months cold rent rate, but can go to three:
 - Can be paid in full or in 3 monthly installments, negotiable
 - Strictly for damages and outstanding utility bills
 - Not to used to off set the last month of rent





Before Signing a Lease



- **Read and understand it, ask yourself these questions:**
 - What does your rent include?
 - When is your rent due?
 - If you are unsure, ask your HSO counselor *FIRST, before signing the lease.*





Before Signing a Lease Cont'd



- **Be careful:**
 - Is your landlord on the Non-Referral/ Restricted Sanction List? If “Yes”, can affect entitlements!
 - A copy of the Non-Referral/ Restricted Sanction List can be obtained from the HSO Office.
 - Are all blanks filled-in or crossed out?
 - Did you and the landlord sign all copies of the lease?





Non-Referral & Restrictive Sanction Lists



- ❖ Signing a lease with landlords on the Restrictive Sanctions List WILL affect your housing entitlements!
- Restrictive Sanction List (validated discrimination):
 - You receive No OHA, No LQA
 - You will receive No HSO services or support!
 - You will receive No Furniture or Appliance Support!
 - Military Personnel could receive possible disciplinary action under the UCMJ.





Non-Referral & Restrictive Sanction Lists Cont'd



- ❖ Signing a lease with landlords on the Nonreferral-List will not affect your housing entitlements but will affect the support provided by the housing office.
- **Non-referral-list** (Questionable or “sharp” business practices, undesirable conditions):
 - No HSO services!
 - No rental contract reviews, inspections or assistance
 - Customers will only receive furnishings and appliance support





Furnishings Support



- Furnishings limited to status and family size
- Only authorized Military personnel and DOD civilians who are entitled to LQA or OHA receive furnishings support
- 1 time issue/pick-up when in-bound, 1 time issue/pick-up when out-bound
- Installation agreement required (signed by landlord at time of lease negotiation)
- Submit request 4 working days prior to desired delivery/pick-up date





After Signing Your Lease



- Immediately order appliances, Loaner furniture, and permanent furniture
- Set up appointment for a move-in inspection:
 - If no appointment available, conduct the move-in inspection jointly with the landlord
 - Move-in inspections sheets available from HSO
 - Contact the UTAP Tax Relief Office for savings on your utilities. The UTAP program is **mandatory** for all DOD civilians





Damages – Proper Reporting Procedures



- Residents are responsible for damages caused by themselves or their Visitors incl. Movers
- Residents need to record the damages on the inventory sheet
- Details are covered in the Housing Brochure





Elective Insurances



- Household insurance (your personal affects)
- Liability insurance (should cover damages to the leased property caused by pets, family, guests, accidents, etc.)
- Tenant Association/Mieterverein (legal advice)
- Legal protection insurance (lawyer & court costs)





Problems? Disputes? Available Options



1. HSO:

- Assistance in communicating between the tenant and landlord
- Amendment to existing lease
- For legal issues/disputes following available options

2. Legal Office

3. Local Tenant Association





Equal Opportunity In Off-Post Housing



- All HSO listings in the Automated Housing Referral Network (AHRN) are non-discriminatory
- If you suspect discrimination:
 - Report the details to HSO immediately
 - File a written complaint for investigation
- Reported and validated discrimination complaints will place the landlord on the Restricted Sanction List





Civilian Financial Entitlements



- Please check with your personnel office regarding entitlements for:
 - LQA
 - TQSA
 - Immobilien fees
 - Miscellaneous expenses
- Helpful handout “Employee Rights and Benefits Information”





Military Financial Entitlements



- Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) rates available from your counselor
- Advance salary available to help pay rent/deposit (DA 4187) (Soldiers must see their local finance office for this)
- Certificate of Non-Availability (CNA) is required for Military personnel to live off-post and will be issued by the On-Post Housing Customer Service Branch prior to being seen by the HSO office.





Military Financial Entitlements Cont'd



- If Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) is authorized:
 - Up to 30 days incoming
 - TLA will be paid and processed in 10 day increments (processed with on –post housing customer service branch)
 - You must aggressively seek off-post housing while on TLA
 - You must view 2 listings within the first week and then a minimum of five (5) listing every additional week while on TLA
 - Check out of Guest House before going TDY or Leave
 - TLA terminates on the day prior to the effective date of the rental agreement
 - TLA can be stopped if it is determined that the servicemember is not aggressively seeking off-post housing.





Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA)



- MIHA Miscellaneous
 - To make quarters habitable (lights, cabinets, sinks, etc.)
- MIHA Rent:
 - Immobilien fees (For servicemembers, only with prior written approval from the Housing Manager)
 - Redecoration fee (negotiated and approved by counselor only!)





Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)



- All military and DOD civilian personnel:
 - Are not required to register with the city hall
 - Are exempt from television & radio fees (GEZ); (excluding cable TV)
 - Military are encouraged to participate in tax relief program to include utility companies. UTAP is mandatory for civilian personnel.





Termination



- When you are in receipt of PCS orders:
 - Pick up a termination package from HSO
 - **Review your lease!** Know how many days notice of termination you must provide
 - Termination must be in writing and sent by registered mail or hand carried to landlord
 - List your unit with HSO, don't leave it up to the landlord or Immobilien





Return of Deposit



- The security deposit is due back after the tenant fulfills all of their obligations
 - Utility Bills (can be withheld 6 months or longer)
 - Damages (can be withheld 6 months up to 1 year)
- German Courts generally allow the landlord 6 months to reconcile including hidden Damages
- Landlord may charge Residents for damages caused by movers and may hold Security Deposit until all claims are settled





Your Opinion Counts!



- Customer survey questionnaires:
 - Highly encouraged with each visit to HSO
 - Suggestions for improvement and constructive criticism always welcome
- Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE):
 - <http://www.wiesbaden.army.mil>
 - Can be used from home, work





Welcome to the

Wiesbaden

Military Community



All important information about living on the economy are covered in the Housing Services Brochure

If we can be of further assistance,
please contact your counselor

Enjoy your tour in Wiesbaden!



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